

Geography

Geography is the study of distributions, patterns, and movements across space, both physical and social. Human geographers study the geographic patterns of various human activities: economic, political, and cultural. Physical geographers focus on the geography of physical processes and their effects: the geography of weather and climate, the geography of landforms and vegetation. Geographers also study different places. At Ohio State, students choose from four tracks. The People, Society, and Environment (PSE) track focuses on relations between people and various natural elements. Urban and Regional Systems (URS) examines social processes and how they interact with the geography of people and their activities, both within and between, cities and regions. Students in the Atmospheric Science/Climatology (ASC) track study weather and climate. Analytic Cartography/Geographic Information Systems (GIS) teaches students to analyze and display data that can be identified geographically.

Pursuing Geography at Ohio State

Students interested in societal aspects of geography (human geography) should take as many high school courses as possible in social studies, geography, and history. All potential geographers should take advantage of high school offerings in computer training, and those interested in weather, cartography, and geographic information systems should also take as much mathematics as possible in high school.

All Ohio State freshman applicants are considered within a competitive admission process for the Columbus campus. The primary criteria for admission are the completion of the applicant's high school college preparatory program, performance in that program as indicated by class rank and/or grade-point average, and performance on either the ACT or SAT. Upon admission to the university, students can declare a major in geography within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Students entering the GIS track or the ASC track must either currently be enrolled in, or starting, the calculus sequence in mathematics.

Geography Requirements

The geography program requires that students complete all courses in their major track with a grade of C- or higher, for an average GPA of C. All tracks require at least eight courses. Students in the URS track or the PSE track earn

a Bachelor of Arts upon successful completion of college. Students in GIS or ASC earn a Bachelor of Science. These latter Bachelor of Science tracks require the completion of the calculus series (Mathematics 151 and 152), and the ASC track requires additional mathematics, college physics, and some chemistry and computer training courses.

The Department of Geography at Ohio State is **one of the foremost Departments of Geography in the United States**. In the most recent national rankings it ranked fourth. It is a Department that has earned its ranking through the international research visibility of its faculty. In terms of its undergraduate programs the Department ranks fifth in the country.

Co-Curricular Opportunities

The Department also offers to its undergraduate majors an intern program. This allows them to gain work experience and make valuable contacts for the future while at the same time accumulating college credit. Once you have twenty hours towards your major in geography then you will be able to apply to any of the variety of agencies that have expressed willingness to take students from the department. Approximately one third of all undergraduate majors in geography participate in an internship.

Honors & Scholars Programs

There are six core honors courses in geography, which reflect the diversity of the field. These include introductory atmospheric science (Geography H120), world and regional geography (Geography H200), economic and social geography (Geography H240), North America (Geography H400), global climate and environmental change (Geography H410), political geography (Geography H460).

Honors students are exposed to research in various ways. About one third of our honors students choose to complete a Senior Honors thesis. Numerous faculty members also

For more information, check these web sites:

Geography: geography.osu.edu

College of SBS: sbs.osu.edu

Ohio State: www.osu.edu

Admissions: undergrad.osu.edu

Multicultural Center: multiculturalcenter.osu.edu

First Year Experience Program: fye.osu.edu

Curriculum Sample*

This is a sample list of classes a student will take to pursue the urban and regional systems track in geography. Since university students need more than specific education in a narrow field, they also will take classes to complete the General Education Curriculum (GEC). The GEC will allow students to develop the fundamental skills essential to collegiate success across major programs. Course work options satisfying the GEC often come from a variety of academic areas of study allowing students to tailor their GEC toward their interests. Note: This sample represents one of several possible paths to a degree in geography. Consult the departmental web site, geography.osu.edu, for details on each specific track.

Freshman Year:

First-Year English Composition	5
Physical Geography & Environmental Issues	5
Mathematical & Logical Analysis	5
Foreign Language (102 & 103)	10
Introduction to the Practice of Statistics	5
Economic and Social Geography	5
Natural Science	5
Minor/Electives	5
SBS Survey	1
Freshman Seminar	1
Total hours	47

Sophomore Year:

Urban Geography	5
Political Geography	5
Elements of Cartography	5
Natural Sciences	10
The Making & Meaning of the American Landscape	5
Foreign Language 104	5
Principles of Micro-Economics	5
Visual/Performing Arts	5
Minor/Electives	5
Total hours	50

Junior Year:

South Africa: Society and Space	5
Internship	5
Urban Political Geography	5
Introduction to Geographic Information Systems	5
Geography of Development	5
History I and II	10
Principles of Macro-Economics	5
Minor/Electives	10
Total hours	50

Senior Year:

Introduction to Geographical Analysis	5
Economic Geography	5
Geography of Transportation	5
Integrated Earth Systems: Confronting Global Change	5
Historical Overview of Human Design on the Land	5
Literature & Society	5
Minor/Electives	15
Total hours	45

actively incorporate research opportunities into their course structures. Laboratories in the various technique courses that undergraduate majors take – Introductory Geographical Information Systems, Cartography, and Introductory Geographical Analysis – add to these opportunities.

Career Prospects in Geography

The ability of URS track graduates to analyze and to integrate various aspects of the Earth's human and physical environments makes them attractive candidates for positions with planning and development agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. Retail chains, financial institutions, insurance companies, real estate and industrial firms employ geographers to collect and analyze data that relate to the firm's production and distribution of goods and services, or they may employ geographers to identify appropriate locations for new or expanded facilities.

Graduates from the PSE track have a variety of career options including working for Environmental and Protection Agencies, state Departments of Natural Resources and Conservation, and for a range of non-profit agencies working both in the United States and overseas in areas of environmental protection, development, and the protection of indigenous ways of life.

There are numerous high-paying jobs, with private companies and governmental agencies, for students with training in computer-based cartography and the use of geographic information systems. This is a major growth area.

Students in the ASC track have job opportunities in the recently modernized National Weather Service, with private forecasting firms, or in television.

With respect to salaries, those with geography degrees do especially well. When the data were last compiled four years ago, the average annual salary of those who had graduated five years earlier from the Department was the highest for any program outside the physical and applied sciences.

Revised June 2008. For the most up-to-date information on the geography program, please visit geography.osu.edu.

Contact information:

Professor Becky Mansfield | Department of Geography |
1036 Derby Hall | 154 North Oval Mall | Columbus, Ohio 43210-1342
(614) 247-7264 | mansfield.32@osu.edu

*This curriculum is for the urban and regional systems track. May more courses are available than are shown here, and the analytical cartography and geographic information systems; atmospheric science and climatology; and the people, society, and environment tracks vary greatly.